

Tornado Safety

Appendix E contains a sample tornado safety plan for you to review.

For the home or small office.

- 1/ Have a tornado plan in place and practice at least once a year.
- 2/ Consider how you will activate your plan. - Buy a Weather Radio with an Alarm feature.
When the weather radio alarm sounds a tornado warning, its time to activate your plan.
As an alternative, if outside Weather Radio coverage, subscribe to a trusted pager service who will page you when watches and warnings are issued for your area.
- 3/ When a tornado warning is issued, enact the plan and move to your pre-selected safe shelter.
- 4/ Have a pre-determined place to meet after a disaster.

For School, Businesses, or place of Worship.

The first step is to have a tornado safety plan. It is your responsibility to know where and when your students, staff, and visitors can take shelter in a matter of seconds. There may be a lot of people to shelter in a short time so good plans and early warning are essential. Plans should be practiced at least once a year to ensure everyone understands the plan and that a plan exists. A simple but effective plan can be found in Appendix E.

Shelter:

In a house with a basement: Avoid windows. Go to the basement and under some kind of sturdy protection (heavy table or work bench), or cover yourself with a mattress or sleeping bag.

In a house with no basement or an apartment: Avoid windows. Go to the lowest floor, small center room (like a bathroom or closet), under a stairwell, or in an interior hallway with no windows. Cover yourself with some sort of thick padding (mattress, blankets, etc.), to protect against falling debris.

In an office building, hospital, or nursing home: Seek a hallway or windowless area in the center of the building, crouch down and cover your head. Interior stairwells are usually good places to take shelter, and if not crowded, allow you to get to a lower level quickly. Stay off the elevators; you could be trapped in them if the power is lost.

In a mobile home: Get out! Even if your home is tied down, you are likely safer outside, even if the only alternative is to seek shelter out in the open. Most tornadoes can destroy even tied-down mobile homes. If your community has a tornado shelter, go there. If there is a sturdy permanent building within easy running distance, seek shelter there. Otherwise, lie flat on low ground away from the mobile home, protecting your head. If possible, use open ground away from trees and cars, which can be blown onto you. If no safe structures are available, encourage your city, county, or park to build a storm safe structure for public use.

At school: Go to an interior hall or room away from large outside structures, such as towers, multi-story additions, and out from under heavy roof mounted objects like air handlers. Avoid rooms with exterior windows and long unsupported spans, such as gyms. Staff and students should crouch low,

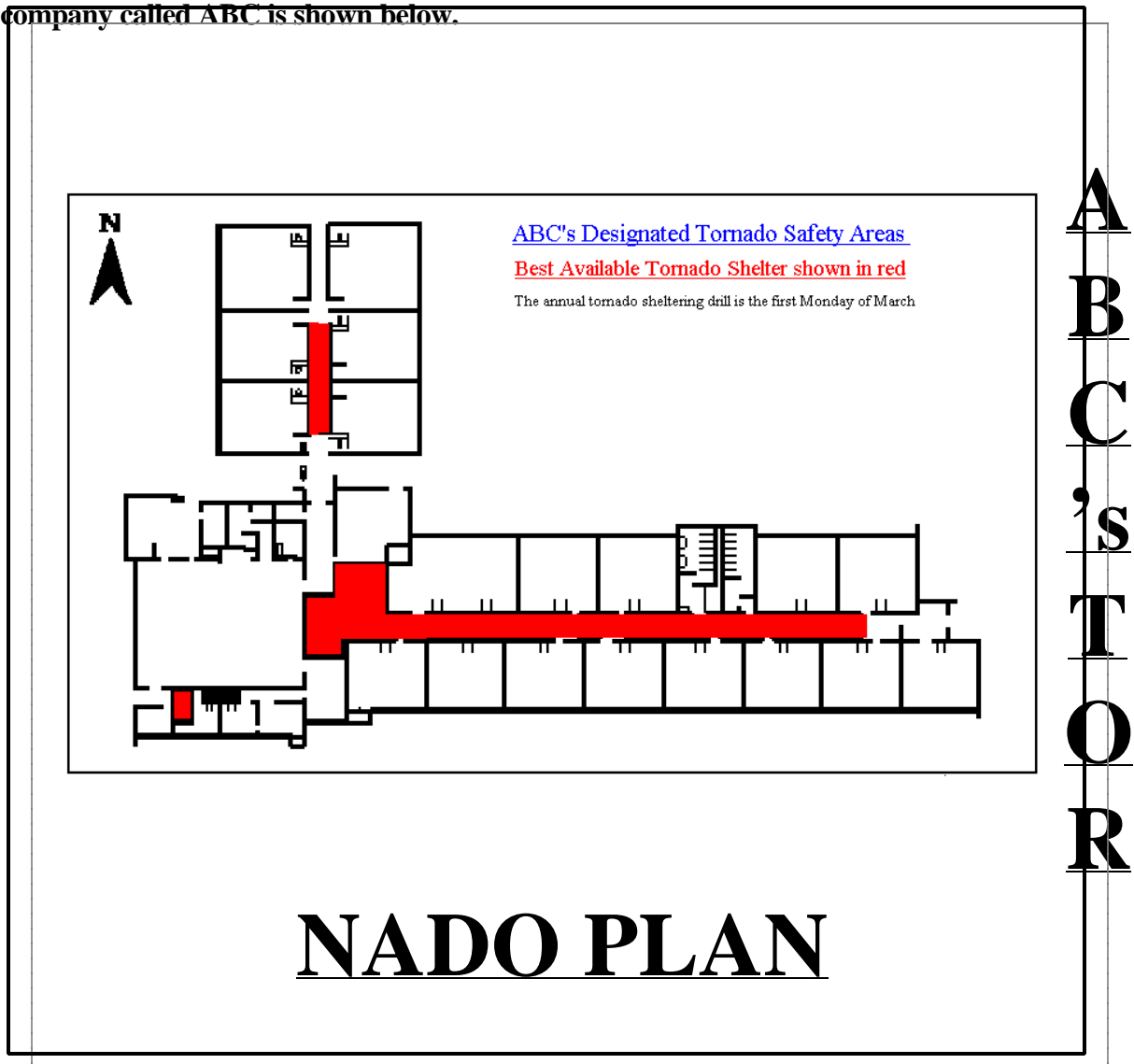
protecting the back of their head with their arms or a book.

In a car or truck: If you can see the tornado far away, and the traffic is light, you may be able to drive out of its path by moving at right angles to the tornado. Otherwise, seek shelter in a nearby building. If in an open area where no shelter is available, exit the car and lie flat on the ground face-down, protecting the back of your head with your arms.

Signs:

No universal signs similar to "emergency exit," or "fallout shelter," currently exist to identify designated tornado shelter areas but there can be at your home, school, or business!

Signs provide a constant reminder and encourage new people to find out about your tornado plan. Develop a sign with simple instructions to follow at the bottom and post it where it will be seen by everyone who enters your school, business, or place of worship. A sample sign for a company called ABC is shown below.



- *In the event of a tornado warning, an alert will sound.**
- *When you hear the alert, please proceed immediately to the nearest designated tornado safe area shown above.**
- *You are in Room 247, your designated safe area is the west stairwell. Remain there until you receive an all clear.**
- *Visitors, if you have questions please ask any of our staff.**